

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. - 18. (Canceled)

19. (Currently amended) A method for increasing levels of biologically active NO in isolated red blood cells, comprising contacting the isolated red blood cells with a composition comprising ~~a reagent selected from the group consisting of: NO, and S-nitrosothiol, an ester of an S-nitrosothiol, and ethyl nitrite.~~

20. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 19, wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitrosoglutathione.

21. - 22 (Canceled)

23. (Currently amended) A method for ~~restoring~~ increasing NO:hemoglobin values to a value in a desirable range, in isolated blood for transfusion, said method comprising contacting the blood with a ~~solution~~ composition comprising ~~a reagent selected from the group consisting of: NO, and S-nitrosothiol, an ester of an S-nitrosothiol, and ethyl nitrite.~~

24. (Currently amended) A method for loading red blood cells with a nitrosothiol comprising contacting isolated blood with a composition comprising an S-nitrosothiol. ~~potentiating the activity of blood for transfusion, comprising adding to the blood a composition comprising one or more thiols.~~

25. - 36 (Cancelled)

37. (New) The method of claim 19, wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitrosocysteine.

38. (New) The method of claim 19, wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitrosohomocysteine.

39. (New) The method of claim 19, wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitrosocysteinylglycine.

40. (New) The method of claim 19, wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitroso-N-acetylpenicillamine or S-nitroso-N-acetylcysteine.

41. (New) The method of claim 19, wherein the S-nitrosothiol includes an ester group.

42. (New) The method of claim 41, wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitrosocysteine ethyl ester.

43. (New) A method for increasing biologically active NO in isolated red blood cells, comprising contacting the isolated red blood cells with a composition comprising nitric oxide.

44. (New) A method for increasing biologically active NO in isolated red blood cells, comprising contacting the isolated red blood cells with a composition comprising ethyl nitrite.

45. (New) The method of claim 23, wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitrosoglutathione.

46. (New) The method of claim 23, wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitrosocysteine.

47. (New) The method of claim 23, wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitrosohomocysteine.

48. (New) The method of claim 23, wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitrosocysteinylglycine.

49. (New) The method of claim 23, wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitroso-N-acetylpenicillamine or S-nitroso-N-acetylcysteine.

50. (New) The method of claim 23, wherein the S-nitrosothiol includes an ester group.

51. (New) The method of claim 50, wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitrosocysteine ethyl ester.

52. (New) A method for increasing NO:hemoglobin values in isolated blood, said method comprising contacting the blood with a composition comprising nitric oxide.

53. (New) A method for increasing NO:hemoglobin values in isolated blood, said method comprising contacting the blood with a composition comprising ethyl nitrite.

54. (New) The method of claim 24, wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitrosoglutathione.

55. (New) The method of claim 24, wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitrosocysteine.

56. (New) The method of claim 24, wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitrosohomocysteine.

57. (New) The method of claim 24, wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitrosocysteinylglycine.

58. (New) The method of claim 24, wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitroso-N-acetylpenicillamine or S-nitroso-N-acetylcysteine.

59. (New) The method of claim 24, wherein the S-nitrosothiol includes an ester group.

60. (New) The method of claim 59, wherein the S-nitrosothiol is S-nitrosocysteine ethyl ester.

61. (New) A method for loading red blood cells with a nitrosothiol comprising contacting isolated blood with composition comprising nitric oxide.

62. (New) A method for loading red blood cells with a nitrosothiol comprising contacting isolated blood with composition comprising ethyl nitrite.